Spaces of Conflict in Everyday Life: Figurations and Methodology

Crossroads Asia Conference, LMU Munich, October 11, 2014

Call for Papers

Deadline for the submission of abstracts: March 31, 2014

Crossroads Asia is a research network that focuses on the area which spans from Northern India to Central Asia and from Eastern Iran to Western China. Our main interest is to crosscut the conventional boundaries of area studies and to think across established demarcations of regions like South, West, or Central Asia. The research also focuses on societal processes that crosscut social boundaries. Border areas and processes of mobilization are among the network’s research topics in which such crosscutting processes come to the fore.

Within the theoretical framework of Crossroads Asia (see Concept Paper Conflict Research on Crossroads Asia), we regard conflicts as a normal and universal aspect of society. Nevertheless, the areas, which the Crossroads-Project focuses on, are characterized by a particularly high incidence of often violent conflicts. Bearing in mind questions of scale, conflicts also combine global, national, regional and local levels. Thus, an international cross-border conflict may have significant impact on the daily life in villages or urban neighborhoods. Even though our focus is not on “the state”, state actors have to be taken into consideration as they are frequently involved in the everyday of conflicts, and “the state” may be an important aspect of the environment in which conflicts take place.

In this sense, we understand conflicts as ‘figurations’ that branch out from particular issues and, via networks, coalitions and oppositions, meander through different levels, sites and affairs. A conflict may start over a religious issue, yet most probably will not remain purely religious but shift towards political and economic spheres. And conversely, different conflicts may intersect at particular sites. Conflicts are not only divisive but also conjoin people in coalitions and forge crosscutting ties.

The conference aims to focus not so much on the contents of conflicts – what they are about – but rather on the how of conflicts: the ways and modes of action and mobilization, the imaginaries and narratives, the structures and linkages created through conflicts. As research itself becomes often part of conflicts, conflicts may therefore have a direct impact on research. We are thus also interested in methodological issues and the politics of research on conflicts, and in conflict situations.

For the Crossroads Asia Conference at LMU Munich, we are particularly interested in contributions that focus on actors’ perspectives on their everyday contexts. They should be based on research in the areas studied by the network and address the following topics:
• The intersection of different conflicts in particular sites
• The connection of different scales and levels of society through conflicts
• The structuration of everyday life by conflicts
• The actors’ relation to conflicts through avoidance or anticipation
• The actors’ framing of conflicts through narratives and imaginaries
• The mobilization of people for or against conflicts
• Methodological issues of studying conflicts

If you are interested in presenting a paper at the conference, we look forward to receiving your abstract of no more than 2 A4 pages and a short CV words before March 31st, 2014 at the following address: crossroads@lmu.de

The selected speakers will be expected to hand in their papers by September 22, 2014. Travel expenses for the invited speakers will be covered.